

Message Text

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SUBJECT: CIVIL DISTURBANCES CONTINUE

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1. NEW CIVIL VIOLENCE BROKE OUT IN EASTERN TURKEY FEBRUARY 23, THIS TIME IN ERZINCAN, RESULTING IN ONE DEATH (A 13 YEAR OLD SCHOOLBOY) AND 40 INJURIES, ACCORDING TO THE TURKISH PRESS. POLICE AND MILITARY FORCES FINALLY RESTORED ORDER AND 42 PERSONS WERE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, AMONG THEM THE LOCAL CHAIRMAN OF THE RADICAL LEFTIST-CONTROLLED TURKISH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION (TOB-DER), TWO PROVINCIAL PARTY OFFICIALS FROM THE REPUBLICAN PEOPLES' PARTY (RPP) AND ONE FROM THE NATIONAL ACTION PARTY (NAP), THE TURKISH RADIO REPORTED.

2. IN ANTALYA ON FEBRUARY 22, POLICE SEARCHED BRANCH OFFICES OF TOB-DER AND THE EXTREME RIGHTIST ULKU OCAKLARI UNDER ORDERS OF THE STATE SECURITY COURT, AND UNCOVERED A SACK OF IRON RODS AND POLITICAL LEAFLETS IN THE ULKU OCAKLARI OFFICES.

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3. MEANWHILE, THE FEBRUARY 15-16 INCIDENTS IN MALTAYA AND

OTHER PROVINCES (REFTTEL) CONTINUED TO DRAW COMMENTS FROM TURKISH POLITICAL LEADERS.

A. PRIMIN SADI IRMAK, SPEAKING IN THE PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET DEBATES FEBRUARY 19, WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, "...I CURSE THE TREACHEROUS PROVOKERS OF THIS MOVEMENT." COMMENTING THAT IT WAS NOT RPT NOT RIGHT TO PORTRAY THE RECENT CLASHES AS BEING TOTALLY INSPIRED BY IDEOLOGY, HE CONTINUED, "THOSE WHO TREACHEROUSLY AND EXTENSIVELY PROVOKED PERSONAL, FAMILY, TRIBAL AND ESPECIALLY RELIGIOUS AND SECTARIAN, AS WELL AS POLITICAL CONFLICTS HAVE PLAYED THE MOST OMINOUS PART IN THE EVENTS..."

B. INTERIOR MINISTER MUKADDER OZTEKIN, SPEAKING IN THE BUDGET DEBATES FEBRUARY 21, REPORTED THAT OUT OF HUNDREDS OF PERSONS TAKING INTO CUSTODY IN CONNECTION WITH THE INCIDENTS FEBRUARY 15-16, 86 WERE FINALLY PLACED UNDER ARREST.

4. MEANWHILE, RPP CHAIRMAN BULENT ECEVIT TOLD A GATHERING OF THE RPP ASSEMBLY AND PARTY LEADERS FEBRUARY 21 THAT THE NATIONALIST FRONT PARTIES AND THE LEFTISTS "OUTSIDE THE RPP" WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR CREATING ANARCHY AT A TIME WHEN THE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE COUNTRY WERE IN A CRITICAL PERIOD. COMMENTING ON THE IRMAK GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE INCIDENTS, ECEVIT WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, "NO PRIMIN CAN CONVINCE ME THE POWER OF THE STATE IS INADEQUATE (TO DEAL WITH THE INCIDENTS)." SUBSEQUENTLY, A DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE RPP ASSEMBLY FEBRUARY 22 CHARGED THAT THE NATIONALIST FRONT PARTIES WERE "IN AND BEHIND" RECENT CLASHES.

5. THE JUSTICE PARTY (JP) EXECUTIVE BOARD RELEASED A STATEMENT THE SAME DAY, CLAIMING THE FEBRUARY 15-16 INCIDENTS OCCURRED WITH THE "SUPPORT AND PROTECTION" OF THE RPP. MEANWHILE, THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DP) EXECUTIVE BOARD IN A SIMILAR STATEMENT ACCUSED TOB-DER OF ORGANIZING MEETINGS IN ORDER TO PROVOKE INCIDENTS WITH THE HELP OF "ANARCHISTS" WHO WERE RELEASED UNDER THE GENERAL AMNESTY OF MAY 1974. NATIONAL ACTION PARTY (NAP) LEADER ALPASLAN TURKES, SPEAKING TO THE PARTY'S ISTANBUL YOUTH BRANCH CONVENTION FEBRUARY 22, REJECTED ACCUSATIONS THAT HIS FOLLOWERS WERE BEHIND THE INCIDENTS. "IF WE WERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEFENDERS OF UNLAWFULNESS, TURKEY WOULD BECOME TOPSY-TURVY," HE SAID.

6. COMMENT: PUBLIC REACTIONS TO THE LATEST INCIDENTS BY TURKISH POLITICAL LEADERS SUGGEST THAT THE PARTIES ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY POLARIZED OVER THE HANDLING OF CIVIL DISTURBANCES. WHILE YOUTH CONTINUE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENTS, RECENT EVENTS HAVE SPREAD BEYOND SCHOOL CAMPUSES AND INVOLVED OTHER

GROUPS OF TURKISH SOCIETY. IN ERZINCAN, WHERE THERE IS A
LARGE ALEVI POPULATION, RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES COULD HAVE PLAYED
A PART IN THE WEEKEND INCIDENT.
BERGUS

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